

REMARKS

The Office Action dated March 8, 2007 has been received and its contents carefully noted. In response thereto, applicants propose to cancel all nonallowable claims, add the allowable limitations of claims 19 and 20 into independent claim 1, cancel claims 19, 20 and 22 and make some clarifying amendments to claims 10, 21, 23, 27 and 30 in an effort to place the application in condition for allowance. Reconsideration of the objections to and rejections of the claims is respectfully requested in view of the foregoing amendments and the following remarks.

Allowable Subject Matter

Applicants appreciate the indication that claims 11-14 are allowed and claim 20 contains allowable subject matter. In this amendment, claim 1 is proposed to be amended by adding the limitations of claims 19 and 20 into independent claim 1. Dependent claims 19 and 20 are proposed to be canceled. All of the remaining dependent claims 2-10, 15-17, 21, 23-25 and 27-31 are proposed to depend on the amended independent claim 1. Accordingly, if the Examiner enters the amendment, claims 1-17, 21, 23-25 and 27-31 would be placed in condition for allowance.

Claim Objections

The Examiner questions various aspects of claims 2, 10, 22, 27 and 30.

With respect to claims 2, 10, 22, 27, claim 22 is proposed to be canceled. Claim 27 does not appear to be a substantial duplicate of either claims 2 or 10 so reconsideration of this objection is respectfully requested.

In the proposed amendment, claim 30 is proposed to be amended to address the points raised by the Examiner.

In view of these amendments, it is believed that the objections should be withdrawn.

Claim Rejection - 35 U.S.C. 112

The examiner has rejected claim 23 as being indefinite. In the attached proposed amendment, changes are proposed claim 23 to address the points raised by the Examiner.

Claim Rejections - 35 U.S.C. §§ 102 and 103

Turning now to the rejections under 35 U.S.C. §§ 102 and 103, claims 1-10, 15-17, 22, 24 and 27-31 have been rejected as being completely shown by Nobuchi (U.S. Patent No. 6,175,492). In rejecting claims 19, 21 and 23 on the grounds of alleged obviousness, the features of Zamora et al. (U.S. Publication No. 2001/0012196) are combined with the Nobuchi patent. Claim 25 has been rejected on the grounds of alleged obviousness when Nobuchi is combined with Lahr (U.S. Publication No. 2003/0132863).

In this response, applicants propose to amend claim 1 by adding the allowable limitations of claims 19 and 20 thereto. Since all the remaining claims appear to have limitations not shown by the prior art, the rejections of claims under 35 U.S.C. §§ 102 and 103 are believed to be moot and should be withdrawn following entry of the amendment.

Conclusion

In view of the foregoing amendments and remarks, it is respectfully submitted that withdrawal of the final rejection, entry of the amendments and allowance of the application are believed to be in order. Such early favorable action is earnestly solicited. The Examiner is invited to call applicant's

attorney if any questions remain following review of this response.

Respectfully submitted,

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